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**SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS SUPPORTS
Inglewood Oilfield Settlement**

A contentious legal battle over oil drilling in the Baldwin Hills has been settled, resulting in a reduction in the number of oil wells in the area, tighter restrictions on new wells and a series of measures to protect air quality, reduce noise and beautify the landscape.

The settlement, approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on July 5th, will be implemented immediately.

“This settlement is the victory area residents and I have sought after working together for nearly five years,” said supervisor Ridley-Thomas.

“Those who live near the oil field will see fewer wells, hear less noise from drilling and have in place stronger air quality protections than exist today. I’m confident this set of reforms is far more thorough than what could have been achieved through a contentious and protracted court battle,” he said.

Covering 1,100 acres, the so-called Inglewood Oil Field is not in the city of Inglewood, but surrounded by Culver City and Los Angeles communities including Baldwin Hills, View Park, Windsor Hills and Ladera Heights. Its name is derived from its position on the Inglewood fault.

Oil drilling at the site dates from 1924, long before sprawling residential communities were built around its perimeter. Over the decades, as the number of homes surrounding the site increased, so too did the concerns of residents.

In 2008 four lawsuits challenged the County's set of environmental regulations of the oil field and its operator, Plains Exploration and Production Co. The plaintiffs were the City of Culver City, Concerned Citizens of South Los Angeles, the Citizens Coalition for a Safe Community and Community Health Councils, Inc.

Approval of the settlement by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors completed the acceptance of the agreement by all parties.

Key elements of the settlement include:

- Reducing the total number of oil wells
- Increased monitoring of air quality
- More stringent noise limits
- Improved landscaping
- Mandatory, recurring health and environmental justice assessments

Supervisor Ridley-Thomas began working with area residents and advocates to address oil field concerns in 2007, when he was a State Senator; members of the Empowerment Congress, a grassroots governing partnership founded by the Supervisor in 1992, brought the issue to his attention.

Two years ago, Ridley-Thomas sought assistance from then-Attorney General Jerry Brown to help mediate the disputing parties in the law suits. Brown assigned two attorneys to the task, who worked with his office to find common ground among the parties. When Kamala Harris was inaugurated attorney general last year, she continued to uphold mediating the Inglewood oil field dispute as a top priority.

"The arrival of the Attorney General's experts marked a turning point," said Ridley-Thomas, "they brought cool heads to a heated environment and in doing so guided us all to a solution that gives all sides more than we would have gotten from a court battle."

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